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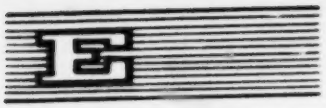

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Second Conference of Ministers of
Transport, Communications and Planning

Addis Ababa, 16 to 18 March 1981

LOMA/IRCOM

REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF EXPERTS

(Addis Ababa, 9-15 March 1981)

M81-2072

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The second intergovernmental Meeting of Experts in Transport, Communications and Planning was held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 9 to 15 March 1981.

B. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

2. Representatives from the following member States of the Economic Commission for Africa participated in the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, the Ivory Coast, Kenya, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Cameroon, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Upper Volta, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Italy attended the meeting as an observer. The following organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations and African intergovernmental organizations also attended the meeting as observers: Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA), Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO), African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), African Development Bank (ADB), African and Mauritian Common Organization (OCAM), Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), International Road Federation (IRF), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Pan-African Postal Union (PAPU), Pan-African Telecommunications Union (PATU), Port Management Association for Eastern Africa (PMAEA), Trans-African Highway Authority (TAHA), Union of African Railways (UAR), and Union of National Radio and Television Organizations in Africa (URTNA).

C. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The meeting was opened by Commander Zewdu Gebremariam, on behalf of the outgoing chairman. In his opening speech he emphasized that the main tasks of the second Meeting of Experts were the updating of the programme of the first phase of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and making necessary arrangements for the preparation of the second phase of the Decade.

4. The representative of the Government of Socialist Ethiopia, H.E. Mr. Yusuf Ahmed, Minister of Transport and Communications and current Chairman of the Conference of Ministers welcomed the participants to Addis Ababa on behalf of the Government and people of Socialist Ethiopia and underscored the importance of the present Meeting of Experts.

5. He recalled that the importance of the first Meeting of Experts in 1979 lay in the significant contribution it had made to the success of the first Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning. He pointed out that the Conference of Ministers, thanks to the great endeavours of the Meeting of Experts, had been able to reach well-balanced decisions on the strategy, targets and programme of action of the Decade.

6. He stressed the crucial role of the technical experts not only in laying the basis for the preparation of the Decade programme but also in ensuring its implementation. As influential representatives of their countries, the experts were instrumental in generating their countries' support for the implementation of the Decade programme.

7. The Minister underlined the role of ECA, as the lead agency, in the preparation and co-ordination of the implementation of the Decade programme. Besides preparing and publishing the documentation necessary to concretize the components of the Decade programme, ECA had undertaken a number of activities aimed at making the international community aware of the objectives of African countries in launching the Decade and at soliciting its support therefor. Furthermore, he observed that during the previous two-year period the exchange of information on the progress of the implementation of the programme between the African countries and ECA had not been as good as expected. In this connexion, he expressed the hope that this would be improved in future.

8. In his opinion, there were three important areas for the consideration of the experts:

(a) They should offer useful suggestions on how best to carry out the studies included in the first phase and on how to implement the entire programme, before the end of the first phase.

(b) They should assist in the advance planning of the next phase of the programme and in the collection of the necessary data and information in their respective countries; and

(c) the third area of concern was the improvement of the machinery for providing information which is necessary for the follow-up of the implementation of the programme. In this regard, he welcomed ECA's proposals for setting up a mechanism for information exchange and monitoring of the implementation of the programme.

9. Finally, the Minister expressed his thanks to the Executive Secretary of ECA and his staff for the commendable service they had rendered so far. He also thanked all United Nations specialized agencies, African regional organizations and experts for their active participation in the technical work during the last two years.

10. The Executive Secretary of ECA in his statement cordially welcomed all participants and stressed their crucial role of examining the issues before them both from the technical as well as policy standpoints in order that they might advise the Conference of Ministers on the best way to implement the programme.

11. He recalled the most important activities undertaken since the first Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning and emphasized the results of the United Nations Pledging Conference. He mentioned that, while approximately $US 5 billion would be available for transport and communications during the first phase of the Decade, donors would prefer to disburse these funds within the framework of existing bilateral aid agreements with African countries.

12. For this reason ECA expected that all African countries would give a very high priority to the Decade projects in their development plans; it was also necessary that the countries advise donors that the projects within the Decade programme do enjoy a high priority. In this regard, he reminded the meeting that in resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res. 79/3 the Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning had agreed to give the highest priority to the implementation of the Decade programme in their respective countries.

13. In further reference to resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res. 79/3 he informed the meeting that, with the support of UNDP, there had been set up within the ECA secretariat a small (Decade) Co-ordination Unit with responsibility of co-ordinating the implementation of the Decade programme.

14. He referred to resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res. 79/2 on the mobilization of resources which had called on the organizations of the United Nations system and other international and intergovernmental organizations to ensure the financing of studies, technical assistance and pre-investment projects planned in the Decade programme. In this connexion, he pointed out that ECA, as the lead agency for the Decade, had received substantial support from UNDP and he expressed the hope that this support would continue in future.

15. Referring to resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res. 79/7 by which the Ministers had approved the establishment of an African Air Tariff Conference, the Executive Secretary mentioned that only 29 countries had participated in the Diplomatic Conference which had been convened to consider a draft convention on the creation of the African Air Tariff Conference but that, disappointingly, only 10 had actually signed the convention at the end of the Diplomatic Conference. He therefore urged African countries which had not done so to sign or ratify the convention.

16. He also recalled resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res. 79/5 on a regional satellite communication system for Africa and, in this connexion, pointed out that in order to avoid duplication of effort it was necessary to co-ordinate the activities of all the agencies which were contemplating conducting feasibility studies on such a system.

17. The Executive Secretary further highlighted the crucial issues which should be considered by the Meeting of Experts. These included evaluation of the activities since the last Conference of Ministers and the establishment of an information exchange for monitoring the implementation of the Decade programme. He also pointed out that the experts should apply their minds to suggesting new ways of mobilizing resources for the Decade programme. One of the ways planned by ECA for mobilizing additional resources was the technical consultative meetings with donors. He therefore urged African countries to participate actively in these meetings because they would bring donors and recipient countries together to discuss the national and multinational projects in which the countries had an interest.

18. Coming to the last two items to be considered by the experts, the Executive Secretary called for ideas on the part of the participants for updating the first phase of the Decade programme and for initiating preparations for the second phase.

19. Finally, the Executive Secretary pointed out that, in accordance with resolution 35/109 of the United Nations General Assembly, the year 1983 had been declared World Communications Year and expressed the hope that the experts would make recommendations for the consideration of the Conference of Ministers on the appropriate manner in which Africa might celebrate the Year.

20. Mr. Paul O. Etiang, Assistant Secretary-General of OAU in charge of Economic Development and Co-operation, in his opening statement pointed out that a gathering of so many representatives of African countries was clear testimony to the growing awareness by African countries of the importance of the transport and communications sector for the economic development of the continent.

21. He stressed that OAU had recognized the significant role of transport for the economic development of African countries and recalled that the OAU Charter called on member States to co-ordinate and harmonize their general policies in the field of transport and communications. The prominent role that the transport and communications sectors played in the African economies was further emphasized by the African Heads of State and Government in April 1980 in Lagos during the first OAU Economic Summit.

22. He therefore underscored the importance of the Meeting of Experts at which the constraints, bottlenecks, difficulties as well as achievements ought to be frankly discussed in order to avoid mistakes of the past and to lay the foundation for more successful endeavours in future.

23. In describing the work of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee, he expressed OAU's sincere appreciation to all members of this Committee for their efforts in preparing the groundwork for more effective action by the Meeting of Experts.

24. He drew the attention of the participants to the difficulties encountered during the implementation of the Decade programme, the most serious of which had been the lack of funds to implement the projects. He therefore expressed the hope that the participants would seriously think of ways and means of raising funds for the implementation of the Decade programme.

25. Referring to the problems of land-locked and semi-land-locked countries, he urged African countries to demonstrate their declared adherence to the principle of African unity and collective self-reliance as enshrined in the OAU Charter and in the Lagos Plan of Action.

26. The Assistant Secretary-General also pointed out that in order to succeed in the implementation of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa an efficient machinery for monitoring the implementation of the Decade would have to be established.

27. Finally, he did not share the view which some held that the programme of the first phase of the Decade was over-ambitious as he believed that, on the contrary, it truly reflected the vastness and urgency of the needs of Africa in the fields of transport and communications.

Election of officers (agenda item 3)

28. The Meeting of Experts decided to retain the same bureau that had been elected at the inaugural meeting in May 1979, that is:

Chairman	Ethiopia
First Vice-Chairman	United Republic of Cameroon
Second Vice-Chairman	Algeria
Rapporteur	Senegal

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work (agenda item 4)

29. The Meeting of Experts adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Meeting
   Statement by the Minister of Transport and Communications of Socialist Ethiopia
2. Statement by the Executive Secretary of ECA
   Statement by the Assistant Secretary-General of OAU in charge of EDECO
3. Election of officers of the Meeting
4. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
5. Discussion of agenda items in plenary
   (a) Report of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee on the Decade
   (b) Report on the implementation of the programme for the first phase of the Decade
   (c) Measures to be taken to establish an information exchange for monitoring the implementation of the programme
   (d) Search for additional sources of financing for the first phase programme
   (e) Preparation for the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities (New York, November 1981)
6. Meeting of Transport and Communications Committees. Discussion on:
   (a) Updating of the programme for the first phase of the Decade
   (b) Arrangements for the preparation of the second phase, 1984-1988
   Meetings restricted to the West and Central African subregions to consider the documents prepared for the Consultative Technical Meetings to be held at Freetown and Yaoundé.
7. Plenary meeting to consider the reports of the Committees
8. Date and place of the next meeting
9. Other matters
10. Adoption of the final report
11. Closure of the meeting

30. The meeting agreed to hold its sessions from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and from 3.00 to 6.00 p.m. every day on regular basis.

D. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Report of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee on the Decade /Agenda item 5 (a)/

31. The Chairman called on the Executive Secretary of ECA and Chairman of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee, to present the report of his Committee.

32. In his presentation, the Executive Secretary pointed out similarities between the agenda of the experts meeting and that of Interagency Co-ordinating Committee. He said the report was intentionally designed to avail the experts of the views of the Committee on each agenda item, in order to assist them in preparing their own report to the Conference of Ministers. He reiterated that the report of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee was very important in that it constituted the input of all United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations involved in the implementation of the Decade.

33. Touching on the details of the report, the Executive Secretary explained that paragraphs 18 to 58 covered the progress of implementation of the previous two years, and that paragraphs 59 to 64 dealt with World Communications Year. He said World Communications Year would later focus on the PANAFTEL programme of the Decade, expound to the international community the problems of Africa in the search for efficient telecommunications services and suggest remedial measures. Paragraphs 65, 66 and 67 concerned the flow of information, particularly between United Nations agencies themselves. A procedure for establishing a smooth, efficient flow of information between African countries and ECA was detailed in the experts' own agenda.

34. Paragraphs 68 to 72 concerned the updating of the programme of the first phase of the Decade, and recorded the experiences of individual agencies in the contacts they had established with countries, as well as a record of projects presented to ECA by agencies or countries. In this connexion, he emphasized that it was the sole responsibility of the soverign States to alter priorities or add new projects, as no agency or organization had any right to change or introduce a new project on its own. He cautioned however, that there were already 771 projects in the first phase of the Decade programme worth about $US 9 billion which allowing for inflation might be $US 11 billion. Most of these 771 projects were yet to be implemented. Caution was therefore necessary to avoid overloading the programme.

35. Regarding the search for additional sources (para. 73-79), he said that after the experience of the Pledging Conference of November 1979 a new approach was called for. With a mandate from the ECA Conference of Ministers, the General Assembly was approached, and approved resources for organizing four technical consultative meetings throughout Africa. These meetings were intended to bring together donors and country experts for more detailed examination of Decade projects, and would be restricted, technical and consultative. Four meetings were proposed to and approved by the third Interagency Co-ordinating Committee meeting. There were two meetings, one each for the 16 ECOWAS countries in road and air transport, post and telecommunications in West Africa to be held from 3 to 11 June 1981 at Lomé, and the 10 Central African countries, in road and inland water transport in June 1981; two other meetings in maritime transport and rail transport that could involve more than one subregion

were also to be convened towards the end of 1981 and the beginning of 1982, respectively.

36. The Executive Secretary concluded by describing the preparation of the second phase programme which, unlike the first phase which had been hastily prepared, would have to rely more heavily on country inputs. While phase I told only half the story of the development of African transport and communications, phase II would tell the full story of the development effort of African transport and communications, at the national, subregional and regional levels.

Report on the implementation of the programme for the first phase of the Decade (agenda item 5 (b))

37. After presentation of the report by the secretariat, the meeting decided that the report should be carefully studied by participants before any general observations were made. The meeting further decided that detailed discussions of the report on sectoral basis would be carried out in subcommittees.

38. The general observations which followed were mainly concerned with the following broad subject matters:

- deviation from the original objectives of the Decade programme and strategy;
- profitability criteria of evaluating projects;
- the role of ECA as lead agency.

These are briefly summarized below:

(a) Deviation from the original objectives and strategy of the programme

39. Most participants expressed grave concern that the original objectives and strategy of the Decade programme which were very clear and concise, viz: priority to (a) regional, subregional and national projects with subregional implications, (b) projects for least developed, land-locked, newly independent, island and frontline countries, and (c) projects of concern to other countries, had been so diluted that this ranking no longer stands out or applies.

40. As evidence, the meeting pointed out that only 16 per cent of the total programme was devoted to regional and subregional projects, as against 52 per cent for national projects alone, in spite of the fact that the regional and subregional projects are designed to integrate Africa and constitute the main objective of the Decade programme.

41. Several views were expressed by the experts on the probable causes of the deviation, chief among which were the fact that:

(a) after the first Meeting of Experts, many countries have continued to submit numerous national projects; and

(b) in the search of funds for the implementation of the projects, countries have concentrated their efforts only on their individual national projects.

42. While some experts observed that the initial ECA missions did not visit all countries, thus an opportunity was given to those countries to submit their national projects later and that national projects are an integral and essential part of the programme, many others expressed the view that such additional projects have been too many and should not have offset the order of priority. The latter group maintained that ECA should not have included these projects without proper scrutiny to ensure that they conformed with the established priority and criteria. One representative, after having emphasized that the ad hoc approach adopted by ECA was attributable to the States, asked about facilitating measures, namely the study on the removal of the physical, legal and administrative barriers that must accompany projects.

(b) Profitability criteria for evaluating projects

43. This matter originated from the experience by many African countries during the November 1979 Pledging Conference in New York and in subsequent encounters with donors, who insisted on financing only financially viable projects at the expense of regional, subregional and other integrative projects.

44. On this point, most of the experts maintained the view that the development and modernization of transport and communications facilities were very critical to the socio-economic development of Africa and as such, profitability could not be applied as the only criteria for evaluating or determining investment in social overhead projects. They all emphasized the fact that in the original Global Strategy and Plan of Action, it had been established that account was to be taken in the choice of transport modes on the basis of maximum social profitability to the economy as a whole, with due regard to the principles of the new international economic order.

45. It was generally pointed out that quantification of developmental projects was difficult since their benefits were diffused and did not usually originate from the point of the investment itself. In addition, most of the African population lives in rural areas where the potential for development was high and the need for transport and communications infrastructures greatest and the use of a profitability criteria would only hinder the development of those areas and, in effect, the entire region.

46. The experts also pointed out that the development of transport and communications facilities in Europe and other developed countries was not based purely on profitability criteria.

47. It was generally agreed that the priorities of the Decade had been determined by African countries and should be maintained. Donors should not be allowed to alter them or dictate new ones to African countries by introducing conditions and criteria for bilateral assistance.

(c) The role of ECA

48. The experts expressed their thanks to ECA for the difficult work it was doing in implementing the programme and the role ECA was playing as the lead agency in the implementation of the Decade programme. They however also observed that while the role was clearly specified in the Global Strategy and Plan of Action, ECA should have been more dynamic in order to efficiently perform the role of lead agency in co-ordinating the implementation of the Decade programme. In general, the experts felt that ECA's role seemed ambiguous and there seemed to be a need to redefine this and determine the machinery to assist it to effectively execute the role. It was also pointed out that a committee might be required to look into this.

49. Some experts pointed out that ECA ought to play a more dynamic and positive role by:

- taking cognizance of political resolutions taken at all levels, particularly those of OAU, when accepting projects submitted by countries;
- putting forward positive and concrete proposals on harmonization of regulations and standards;
- making recommendations on administrative and other procedures which hinder the full utilization of transport and communications services and facilities;
- analysing and summarizing the conditions and terms of loans and grants of the various donors (and financial institutions) and making such information available to African countries;
- assisting countries with OAU in the negotiations for loans and grants from donors;
- playing a major role in identification and execution of feasibility studies with consultants;
- giving advice on appropriate technology for the various projects, and on how best countries could obtain funds for project execution.

50. One participant observed that a 50 per cent reduction in the number of projects in phase I should be made, otherwise the implementation target would not be achieved in the remaining three years of phase I.

51. Another participant felt that the work load of the ECA Transport, Communications and Tourism Division was too heavy and wondered why some of the functions had not been decentralized to the subregional MULPOCs which were better situated to liaise with and assist the countries in negotiations with donors.

52. The secretariat thanked the experts for their constructive comments and observations and pointed out the importance attached by ECA and OAU and the members of Interagency Co-ordinating Committee to the Decade programme and stressed the fact that the two organizations were there to serve the interests of African countries and would carry out any mandate entrusted to them.

53. The secretariat pointed out that there was no intentional deviation by ECA from the original objectives and strategy of the Decade and hoped that from past experience, the meeting would give ECA the proper mandate to effectively carry out its role. As an international organization, ECA was powerless in bilateral and other negotiations and did not take unilateral decisions on behalf of member States.

54. In conclusion it appealed to member States to respect the objectives and strategy they established for the Decade and to grant ECA any appropriate mandate on regional and subregional projects. Algeria expressed reservations about certain projects introduced in the first phase by some member States.

World Communications Year [agenda item 5 (b)]

55. A member of the secretariat described the objective, scope, intent and prospects for Africa of World Communications Year, 1983 (document DEC/TRANSCOM/CM/II/2/1). He referred to ECA's programme proposals for the Year and indicated that the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee had recommended that a programme of activities for the Year should be organized in the African region and that this programme should focus on the PANAFTEL project which already formed part of the Decade programme.

56. The ITU representative, speaking in support of the ECA statement, added that World Communications Year was conceived on African initiative and designed to fall half-way in the life of the Decade. He cautioned, however, that the declaration was conditional and depended entirely on resources that could be mobilized from member States. Several participants asked that information should be requested from the ITU Secretary General.

Measures to be taken to establish an information exchange for monitoring the implementation of the programme [agenda item 5 (c)]

57. A member of the ECA secretariat introduced this agenda item and gave a full explanation of the purpose of the information machinery intended to be established. It was disclosed that the machinery would not only provide information on the progress of the implementation of the Decade programme but would also assist to co-ordinate and stimulate the Decade, which was the active role of ECA in the implementation of the Decade programme.

58. It was further mentioned that the secretariat had prepared three types of questionnaires which were annexed to document DEC/TRANSCOM/CM/II/2, namely:

- Form for supplying information on project implementation to be used by countries (annex I);
- form to provide information on projects in the transport and communications subsectors, which were ongoing or were in the pipeline, to be used by executing agencies (annex II); and
- form to provide information on projects in the transport and communications subsectors, which were ongoing or were in the pipeline, to be used by funding agencies (annex III).

59. The secretariat urged participants to fill in the form which concerned their country (annex I) whenever they received it and to forward it to ECA regularly twice a year, in January and July.

60. The meeting was assured that, as soon as ECA received such and other information on the implementation of the Decade programme, it would process and disseminate all information to member countries of the Commission.

61. The secretariat further briefed the meeting on the need to nominate a spokesman in the relevant ministries dealing with the implementation of the Decade programme in each country and urged the Meeting of Experts to transmit the name of the nominee to ECA as soon as possible so that immediate contact could be established by ECA.

62. Participants expressed their views on the importance of the exchange of information on the implementation of the Decade programme. The representative of Morocco suggested and the meeting agreed that the following amendments be made to the form:

(a) a column should be provided on the form to be used by countries which would show the activities of the forecasted project;

(b) ECA should regularly disseminate such and other information after it had been processed and it should be accompanied by general information on the economy of the individual countries to which it would be sent.

Search for additional sources of financing for the first phase programme

/ agenda item 5 (d) /

63. A representative of the secretariat, in introducing the item, referred to the brief report (document DEC/TRANSCOM/CM/II/3) prepared by ECA and distributed to all participants. He said that the main concern of ECA was its contribution towards the search for funds for the Decade programme, particularly regional and subregional projects. ECA, together with the specialized agencies of the United Nations and intergovernmental organizations, was endeavouring to mobilize resources, and cited the preparation of multisectoral development programme for the Kagera River Basin for a consortium of would-be donors, the contribution of funds by the Netherlands Government for inter-connected railway projects in the West African subregion and improvement of national air and river transport in Central Africa and assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany that had made it possible to establish a co-ordinating committee that included ECA, OAU, ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and BMZ and finally the intent to second, at their own expense, experts from the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium and France to work with ECA, as indications of concrete support for the Decade programme.

64. He also cited UPU postal projects for Djibouti and Mauritania (Kuwait Fund), ITU telecommunications project for the third African Telecommunications Conference, and UNESCO's training project in broadcasting funded by NORAD, and broadcasting equipment procurement project funded by France and the Federal Republic of Germany as some examples of agency involvement in the implementation of the Decade.

65. Finally in an attempt to explore available channels in the search for and mobilization of funds, ECA had embarked upon the concept of technical consultative meetings.

66. He informed participants that the technical consultative meetings scheduled to be convened in Freetown and Yaoundé in June 1981 were considered of vital importance to the Decade in that technical experts of donor and recipient countries would have ample opportunity to examine Decade projects in greater detail. He urged the experts to study

thoroughly the documents prepared for the purpose by ECA and bring to the attention of their respective Governments the purposes and prospects of the planned meetings so as to derive maximum benefits from the 'awareness' campaign and promotion effort.

67. He further elucidated that other subregional and sectoral technical consultative meetings had been planned in late 1981 and also in January 1982 (maritime and railway transport). Details would be communicated to all concerned as soon as arrangements had been finalized.

68. As far as the implementation of regional and subregional projects was concerned, ECA had full responsibility, and had to assist countries in their effort to mobilize the required resources.

69. Many participants repeatedly reiterated that ECA had the mandate and the full responsibility to seek and obtain the funds required and needed to also make a concerted effort to assist African Governments to locate and mobilize additional funds for those regional and subregional projects.

70. In recognition of ECA's concern that the funds made available for the implementation of Decade projects fell far short of expectation, the idea was put forward and supported that ECA should also solicit the expertise, good offices and channels of African financial institutions, for the location and mobilization of additional funds.

71. The Meeting of Experts then decided to adopt the report as presented.

Preparation for the Pledging Conference for Development Activities / agenda item 5 (e)/

72. In introducing the document (DEC/TRANSCOM/CM/II/4), a member of the secretariat briefed participants that from the results of the last pledging conference which had been convened by the United Nations Secretary-General in New York in November 1980, it would appear that there was no enthusiasm on the part of the industrialized world for the Decade ($US 35,000), especially when compared with the top money-earner UNDP ($US 482,200,000) or the next best UNICEF ($US 167 million) or even the third in line UNIDO ($US 9,095,803). Nevertheless, considering that the Decade was the most recent entry into the arena of more prominent and long-established development organizations, the Decade performance should be considered satisfactory, if not impressive. It should also be taken as a challenge by the African Governments to publicize more vigorously the aims, programmes and priorities, cultivate international awareness of the prospects of the Decade for Africa and the rest of the world.

73. He concluded that, although ECA would spare no effort to take advantage of this opportunity, it was also the solemn duty of every expert to alert his Minister of Finance through his Minister of Transport, Communications or Planning to the advantages and prospects of the intended global Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

Procedural matters

74. In an effort to facilitate the work of the meeting well in advance, the Chairman put forward a procedural suggestion that, for the sessions dealing with agenda item 6 (a) and (b), the meeting should break up into two committees, one for transport and another for communications, chaired either by the first and second vice-chairmen of plenary respectively, or by chairmen and bureaux of their own choice.

(a) Report of the Transport Committee

Updating of the programme for the first phase of the Decade

75. The Executive Secretary told the experts that deletions from or additions to the first phase programme would have to be made by the Meeting of Experts before ECA could amend Volume II of the Plan of Action.

76. He urged the experts to note two important facts when deliberating on this agenda item:

- that the first ECA Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning had approved a total of about 771 projects estimated at a cost of $US 9 billion at 1978 prices;

- that the search for funds to finance this large number of projects was still continuing with only limited success;

and warned that, unless restraint was exercised and the temptation resisted to increase the number, and therefore the cost, of projects to be financed during phase I, Africa would give a poor image of being unrealistic to the rest of the world.

77. He suggested that there still existed the possibility for new projects to be included in Phase II rather than overburden Phase I.

78. The secretariat further elaborated on this agenda item by giving a full explanation of the purpose and the need for updating the first phase programme of the Decade. The secretariat pointed out that during the third meeting of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee in October 1980 the need to update the first phase of the Decade programme had generally been accepted.

79. Documents DEC/TRANSCOM/WP/81/1 and DEC/TRANSCOM/WP/81/1/Add.1 were presented. They contained the lists of additional projects to be included in and those to be withdrawn from the Phase I programme at the request of African Governments.

80. The secretariat further explained that projects listed in the documents presented fell into two categories, namely national projects and regional and subregional projects with those submitted by the specialized agencies of the United Nations falling into the latter category. Furthermore, an addendum to Volume II of the Plan of Action of the Decade would have to be prepared using the same format as in that document.

81. Finally the secretariat requested member States to supply their new projects by 31 May 1981.

82. After the secretariat had presented the documents, the Chairman opened the floor for discussion to enable member States to express their views.

83. Many participants indicated that they had new projects for inclusion in the first phase and that a few projects had been fully implemented.

84. At this juncture, the Chairman proposed that all the delegations that had new projects to be included in the first phase programme of the Decade or those which intended to delete projects from the first phase programme should submit their lists of projects to the secretariat. The proposal was accepted.

85. Consequently, a number of delegations submitted new projects to be included in an addendum to Volume II of the Plan of Action.

86. Finally, the meeting adopted the two documents presented on this agenda item, namely document DEC/TRANSCOM/WP/81/1 and DEC/TRANSCOM/WP/81/1/Add.1.

87. The Algerian delegation made a reservation with respect to certain projects raised during the discussion of this agenda item.

Arrangement for the preparation of the second phase, 1984-1988

88. The Executive Secretary informed the experts that in his view, the United Nations specialized agencies and the various regional intergovernmental organizations would have to assume responsibility in their respective fields of competence to ensure a better programme during Phase II.

89. He pointed out that the first phase programme had been prepared in a rush in order not to lose too much time and also to maintain the momentum of the General Assembly resolution and the interest of the international community. For Phase II, however, there was ample time for a thorough preparation and, in this connexion, member States would have to play a more active role.

90. He maintained that the information given in the documents for Phase I was only partial and therefore misleading since it did not indicate the efforts made by African countries themselves for the improvement of their transport and communications facilities. He further pointed out the fact that there was no information on other transport and communications projects which African countries were executing but which were not contained in the Decade programme; in the absence of such information, it could be erroneously concluded that the Decade programme was intended solely for external financing with no participation by African Governments.

91. He concluded by stressing that a better preparation of Phase II, by showing prominently the projects to be financed by African countries from their own resources, would dispel any misconceptions about the commitment of Africa to the successful implementation of the programme.

92. A member of the ECA secretariat then introduced document DEC/TRANSCOM/WP/81/2 which dealt with the preparation for the second phase of the Decade programme. He pointed out that the emphasis placed on regional and subregional projects in the document was not meant to be belittle the importance of national projects; rather it was to underscore the need for more vigour in mobilizing resources for these multi-country projects since the countries themselves usually promoted their national projects. Furthermore, the projects considered in the document were the 221 studies whose implementation during the first phase would form the basis for investment projects in Phase II. The document also referred to the efforts undertaken by ECA towards mobilizing resources for these studies and mentioned in particular the discussions still going on with UNDP and the OPEC Special Fund.

93. Various recommendations in the document were referred to and were brought to the attention of the participants for them to give their views thereon.

94. Finally the secretariat reminded the meeting of the need to set up a time-table for the preparation of the second phase. After an exhaustive debate on this agenda item, the Executive Secretary made the following suggestions for the preparation of the second phase of the Decade and they were adopted:

95. On the modalities to be followed, he suggested that:

(a) Each member State should prepare its own programme for implementation during the years 1984-1988 and in doing so should indicate regional, subregional and national projects. On the basis of the various national programmes, ECA would be able to prepare a master plan for the whole continent.

(b) The national programme should indicate the following:

(i) projects which would be financed entirely from national resources;

(ii) projects for which the government would provide only partial financing with the balance being expected from external sources. The amount of national financing should then be indicated in order to show how much external financing is required;

(iii) projects to be financed wholly from external sources.

(c) The same exercise should be carried out by the specialized agencies of the United Nations and African intergovernmental organizations in respect of regional and subregional projects for which they were responsible.

96. On setting up criteria:

(a) He pointed out that it was the responsibility of each country to set up its own priorities for its national programme. In so far as the whole programme of the Decade was concerned, however, the criteria for the ranking of projects laid down in Volume I of the Decade strategy by the African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning, were still valid and would remain so until the end of the Decade unless they are revised by another Conference of Ministers.

(b) He suggested that member States should submit their national programmes to ECA by the first quarter of 1982 in order to enable the secretariat to co-ordinate and harmonize all projects which would constitute a Phase II programme. Thereafter, ECA would be able to send out field missions to finalize the programme with the countries and prepare two reports, with one showing projects in whose financing African Governments would participate and another those to be financed entirely from external sources.

97. The Algerian delegation reserved its position on this agenda item.

Report on issues raised during the meeting of the Transport Committee

98. The Committee decided to entrust the consideration of certain important issues raised during the course of the discussion to two working groups, namely working groups 1 and 2. The working groups were to consider these issues in depth and to make appropriate recommendations to the whole Committee.

99. Issues to be discussed by working group 1 were:

(a) objectives and strategies of the Decade and the discernible shift in emphasis of the priorities established in Volume I of the Global Strategy.

(b) the role of ECA as the 'lead agency' of the Decade:

(i) terms of reference of the ECA secretariat;

(ii) terms of reference of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee; and

(iii) strengthening of the UNTACDA Co-ordination Unit and its relationship with the ECA MULPOC Offices.

(c) the role of ADB as a financial institution and the establishment of a fund for the benefit of the LDCs.

100. The following items were identified for discussion by working group 2:

(a) freedom of the air;

(b) the establishment of an African Air Traffic Conference (AFRATC);

(c) tariffs on other transport modes (railways, shipping, ports, etc.).

101. The two working groups met separately to draft their reports and draw up proposals and recommendations.

102. With regard to the discussion of tariffs in other transport modes, the Committee was informed that the Traffic Committee of the Union of African Railways would consider issuing railway tariff at the forthcoming Technical Committee on Traffic scheduled to be held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 7 to 10 July 1981. All African railways would be invited to participate in the deliberations of the Committee.

(i) Report of working group 1

103. Objectives of the Decade: It was agreed that to the list of the objectives of the Decade appearing in Volume I of the Global Strategy a new objective should be added as follows:

- "restructuring of the transport sector to ensure African trade with the rest of the world under the most favourable conditions for the continent".

104. Order of priorities: The working group recommended that the order of priorities in the implementation of the Decade projects as outlined in Volume I of the Global Strategy did not call for any change.

105. Change of direction of the Decade: The working group felt that the implementation of projects so far had not proceeded in accordance with the order of priority contemplated in the Global Strategy in that national projects were receiving more financing than regional and subregional subjects. This tendency was to be regretted and everything possible should be done to arrest it if the original concept of laying emphasis on projects which enhanced the physical integration of the continent was to be adhered to.

106. Role of ECA and other agencies: The role of the ECA with regard to projects covers regional, subregional and national projects. It also included projects of disadvantaged countries such as least developed, land-locked, newly independent and island countries. In discharging its responsibilities vis-a-vis these projects ECA should prepare three separate lists of projects, i.e., a list for each of the three categories of (a) regional and subregional, (b) disadvantaged countries, and (c) other national projects. The specific responsibilities of ECA in respect of each category of projects are spelt out in detail hereunder.

107. ECA action for the regional network: ECA's responsibilities with regard to regional projects should be to:

(a) design and define the basic network to be submitted to the Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning for its approval,

(b) co-ordinate the implementation of the basic networks,

(c) co-ordinate the regulations and rates to be applied to the various networks,

(d) promote the standardization of equipment and infrastructure,

(e) establish a schedule of implementation for the network,

(f) co-ordinate the search for funds in collaboration with ADB and the countries concerned,

(g) promote regional centres for study, research and training,

(h) co-ordinate and promote the establishment of new regional institutions,

(i) promote the creation of regional and subregional transport and communications users' councils.

108. Role of ECA in the programme for disadvantaged countries

With regard to the disadvantaged countries ECA should:

(a) assist those countries in designing and building a network to open up the land-locked countries,

(b) help the countries to find financing for the projects,

(c) search for financing to establish a special fund for the programme of land-locked, least developed, island and newly independent countries and identify projects to be financed under this fund. Furthermore, a specific percentage of any funds meant for the funding of the Decade programme should be set aside for the projects of these countries.

109. Role of ECA in national projects: Under this heading ECA's responsibilities are to:

(a) collate all information on projects constituting national programmes,

(b) disseminate information on the programme and its implementation to the funding institutions and all countries concerned, and

(c) give technical advice to the countries involved.

110. ECA should be given the necessary manpower and financial resources to carry out the above activities. A method of internal financing is to be proposed by ECA. In the meantime, the Conference might recommend that UNDP should provide the Decade with the necessary resources.

111. Role of other agencies: Other agencies should:

(a) give advice on sectoral projects,

(b) conduct sectoral studies at the request of ECA and perform any other task requested by ECA,

(c) transmit all recommendations made by meetings held as part of the activities to the Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning.

112. Role of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee: The main tasks of the Committee are to:

(a) co-ordinate the activities of the agencies/organizations,

(b) prepare an annual report on its activities for submission to the Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning.

113. Role of the MULPOCs: The MULPOCs should play a more active role in the implementation of the Decade programme and should:

(a) assist States in drawing up regional projects,

(b) co-ordinate and supervise the implementation of subregional projects, and

(c) give technical support to subregional organizations.

114. The role of ADB: The ADB as the leading regional financing institution could:

(a) support ECA in its search for funding,

(b) make available special funds for the Decade.

115. Role of the Conference: The role of the biennial Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning is to approve the ECA programme and the report of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee.

(ii) Report of the working group 2 on air transport

116. The group took note of the efforts made by the Association of African Airlines (AFRAA) and AFCAC aimed at harmonizing the policy of African States with respect to bilateral air transport agreements. It felt that measures presently taken by AFCAC were such that they would result in the best possible development of international air services, in particular in areas relating to the structure of air routes, the frequency of flights, the co-ordination of schedule and co-operation between airlines agreements.

117. The group pointed out that the development of intra-African links was jeopardized by restrictive government policies with respect to the mutual granting of fifth freedom traffic rights even in the case of routes which were not serviced by the national airlines.

118. The group considered that co-operation among airlines in the form of joint operations on certain routes constituted in part a solution to the problems raised by the exchange of fifth freedom rights.

119. The group felt that it was necessary to bring about co-operation among all States concerned, including those which did not have airlines providing international services, and allow them to participate in any discussions concerning the modalities of the exchange of fifth freedom rights.

120. The group agreed that the policy with respect to the granting of fifth freedom rights was linked to the existence of a joint policy on the establishment of air tariffs. It noted in the respect that resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res. 79/7 adopted by the first Conference of Ministers on the establishment of an African Air Tariff Conference had been implemented in accordance with the OAU resolution on the same issue.

121. The group decided to recommend that a resolution should be adopted calling on all countries which had not done so to sign or ratify the convention establishing the African Air Tariff Conference. The convention was signed by 10 States at the end of the Diplomatic Conference convened pursuant to resolution CM/Res.805 (XXXV) adopted by the Council of Ministers at Freetown, Sierra Leone, in July 1980.

122. Furthermore, the group considered that the technical aspects of the question on the exchange of fifth freedom rights had been discussed within AFCAC and AFRAA and that resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res.79/6 of the first Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning had been aimed at promoting development of African air transport.

123. After an exchange of views on the matter, the group considered that the Meeting of Experts should suggest the following measures to the Conference of Ministers.

(a) resolution ECA/UNTACDA/Res.79/6 should be submitted to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU which would meet shortly at Nairobi and be accompanied by an explanatory note on different aspects of the question,

(b) during the exchange of fifth freedom rights, States should take the interests of the different parties into account.

(b) Report of the Communications Committee

124. The Committee agreed to reaffirm the priorities set out in Volume I of the Decade, namely, that first priority should be given to multinational projects and national projects with regional or subregional implications and second priority to purely national projects.

125. It was agreed that since the Committee has no mandate nor means to express any views on the submission of sovereign States, each State should update its national projects within its national development plan and submit them to the ECA secretariat.

126. The format for the submission of national projects was agreed as follows: Title, cost estimate, brief summary of the project and desirable date of execution of projects. The deadline for the submission of detailed project proposals was fixed as the end of May 1981.

127. The Committee also agreed that those member States which had not initially submitted their national projects in 1979 could do so at this stage.

128. The discussion on regional projects started with the telecommunications sector. It was pointed out that significant additions were principally those projects proposed by ECOWAS and those by SADCC. Representatives of member States were invited by the Committee to revise the list, consult with their counterpart States and submit in writing their views, amendments, deletions or proposals for updating as appropriate.

129. A lengthy discussion was held on the subject of rural telecommunications. It was strongly emphasized that the greatest importance should be attached to the improvement of rural telecommunications.

130. It was mentioned that current studies concerning rural telecommunications would consider all modes of modern technology for the rural needs.

131. With regard to this point the Committee was informed about PATU's "Committee of 11" which, according to the Secretary-General of PATU, had been mandated by OAU to co-ordinate studies on an African Regional Satellite System (AFROSAT). It was emphasized by member States that there should be complete co-ordination of all studies that are concerned with the Regional Satellite System for Africa and that duplication of studies should be avoided.

132. The OAU representative informed the Committee that OAU had expressed great concern about the need to harmonize all studies and therefore requested all the parties concerned to hold another special interagency co-ordinating committee meeting to harmonize the various studies in order to be able to present an integrated approach to the Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning.

133. The special interagency co-ordinating meeting was subsequently held under the chairmanship of OAU. It agreed to request OAU, ECA, the specialized agencies of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity and African inter-governmental organizations involved with the various proposed study projects on the proposed African Regional Satellite Communications System to devise practical modalities for the harmonization and integration of all such studies into a single project. It also agreed to recommend to the Conference of Ministers that an intergovernmental experts meeting be subsequently organized to examine the harmonized and integrated study on the proposed African Regional Satellite Communication System and that the result and recommendation of such an experts meeting be examined by a special plenipotentiary conference of PATU to which Ministers of Information and Broadcasting might be invited to determine the feasibility of the proposed African Regional Satellite Communications System.

134. The Committee had a lengthy discussion on the importance of research and the establishment of a telecommunications industry in Africa. In view of the importance of the subject the Committee agreed that a recommendation be prepared for the attention to the Conference of Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning.

Telecommunications

135. The Committee looked into the projects from TEP-03 to TEP-24 and noted those projects that were completed. It also discussed the amalgamation of some, the change of title of others as well as the revision of their cost estimates.

Broadcasting

136. The Committee reviewed the regional projects BRP-01 to 14 and adopted them as in Volume II with some modifications, in particular BRP-05.

137. The UNESCO representative submitted the following projects for inclusion in the first phase of the Decade:

- Broadcasting-manpower development;
- Assistance for the development of news agencies.

The Committee adopted the two projects as submitted.

Postal services

138. With respect to postal services, emphasis was placed on the improvement and organization of service in rural areas and the establishment of regional training and transit centres. The Committee then adopted the postal service projects as listed in Volume II.

Manpower training

139. The Committee agreed that there was a pressing need to implement all the projects in the manpower development programme and urged strenuous action to obtain funds for them. It noted the proposal for the upward revision of the estimated cost for project MAP-11. It also noted that Kenya was already taking steps to provide additional infrastructural facilities for the centre and that Senegal was also undertaking preparatory activities for this project.

140. The Committee was further informed about:

(a) The third Training Committee of the Eastern and Southern Africa subregion held in Mauritius, October 1976 which recognized the need for an advanced level institute for the subregion;

(b) Twelfth Annual subregional Conference held in Seychelles, September 1977 which identified Nairobi as the centre of the Institute and which urged ITU to set aside funds and to appoint international training experts to define the type of courses to be run in this institute;

(c) Thirteenth Annual Subregional Conference held in Maseru, Lesotho, in September 1978 which requested the experts to expedite the survey so that, early implementation of the resolution reached at Seychelles could be effected in which it was also agreed that the fundings of the survey team be discussed in April 1979 in Addis Ababa, by the Conference of Ministers.

141. In consideration of the above the Committee urged Kenya and Senegal to accelerate the preparation of plans for the necessary infrastructure for the two centres in accordance with MAP-11.

Arrangements for the preparation of the second phase 1984-1988

142. The document DEC/TRANSCOM/WP/81/2 was presented by the ECA secretariat. After a lengthy discussion the Committee felt that the time-table set out in the above document was rather restrictive.

143. The secretariat informed the Committee that the time-table presented was the best given the time-table the secretariat has to work within. Nevertheless, the Committee might change the proposed time-table if it so wished but in doing so account should be taken of the dates for the meetings of legislative organs of the United Nations system, OAU and other intergovernmental institutions.

Preparation of the second phase programme

144. With regard to the preparation of the second phase programme, the Committee agreed that appropriate lessons should be drawn from the experience of the first phase programme which was unavoidably drawn up hurriedly. The Committee also agreed that detailed preparatory action should be carried out at the national level to ensure that the projects proposed for the Decade were part of national development plans.

145. For the formulation of regional programmes, consultations should be held at subregional levels with the interested intergovernmental organizations.

146. The Interagency Co-ordinating Committee should provide technical assistance to countries and subregional groupings on request.

(c) Preparation for the technical consultative meetings

147. It had been decided to organize two technical consultative meetings in June 1981 for the West and Central African subregions. In preparation for those meetings, ECA, together with consultancy firms, had compiled documents. The draft documents had been submitted for consideration at the present Conference to the authorities of the two subregions.

148. A meeting was to be held at Lome, Togo, from 8 to 11 June 1981 for the 16 ECOWAS States, with another to be held at Yaounde, the United Republic of Cameroon from 23 to 26 June 1981 for the Central African States.

Report on the meeting with West African countries

149. For the West African subregion, the transport projects -- roads, air transport - were considered by the experts of the subregion.

150. Three new regional projects had been included in the document prepared by ECA.

151. The following decisions were taken by the meeting:

(a) Those countries wishing to make changes in those projects should do so before 15 March 1981;

(b) Those countries wishing to introduce new projects could also do so but those new projects should be sent to ECA before the end of March 1981 to enable ECA to prepare an addendum to the document;

(c) The documents submitted by ECA were approved with amendments introduced by Benin.

152. After the discussions on transport projects, the meeting went on to discuss the communications sector document.

153. It was pointed out in discussion that only priority 1 projects, that is projects with regional or subregional character, or national projects with regional implications in the West African subregional had been included in the document.

154. The ECA secretariat indicated that although ECOWAS, UPU and ITU had been consulted in the preparation of the draft document, it was possible that some projects included needed to be updated and new ones inserted. It was emphasized however that proposals for new projects had to present as full information as given in the document for each project in the draft document.

155. The secretariat also indicated that details of required revisions had to be submitted to the secretariat before 16 March if the final document was to be published by 31 March 1981. This time limit had been imposed on the secretariat by the need to have the documents in the hands of the donors and governments that may be involved with the Lome meeting by mid-April 1981. All agreed proposed revisions which failed to meet the time limit of 16 March would be included in an addendum to the final version of the document to be published by the secretariat.

156. All projects were subsequently examined by the delegates and amendments made thereto.

157. The representatives of the following countries and organizations indicated their intention of submitting new proposals for inclusion: Benin, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal, the Upper Volta, ITU.

158. The representative of Sierra Leone indicated that his delegation had already submitted proposals on Decade projects to the secretariat. Receipt of these could not be confirmed.

(d) Report on the meeting with Central African countries.

159. The aim of the meeting was to consider the draft document prepared for submission to the Technical Consultative Meeting of the Central African countries with donors, which would take place in Yaounde from 23 to 26 June 1981.

160. A representative of ECA secretariat opened the meeting and explained the objectives of the forthcoming meeting.

161. He stressed that the programme should be submitted to potential donors not as ECA projects but as projects of the countries of the subregion. He also explained that, in accordance with the stipulations of ECA Conference of Ministers resolution, the projects to be submitted to donors should cover only roads and inland water transport.

162. The representatives of T.P. O'Sullivan (consulting firm) further elaborated on the draft document and indicated that it had been prepared on the basis of the information given to the firm by the countries concerned. He invited comments on the document to make sure that all projects submitted by countries were considered and properly reflected therein.

163. The representatives of Burundi and the Congo presented their comments on and amendments to the document. These were duly noted by the representative of the consulting firm for insertion in the final document.

164. Some delegations pointed out that not enough time had been given to them to consider the document in detail and give their comments. Therefore, they proposed that delegations should submit their comments and amendments not later than 15 March 1981 to the ECA secretariat for inclusion in the document summarizing all projects to be presented to the potential donors. Thereafter, all amendments, corrections, as well as new projects, if any, would be given to the consulting firm for inclusion in the document.

165. It was agreed that if any additional information on new projects to be submitted was required, it would be provided by the countries during the Yaounde meeting. These projects should be prepared by the countries themselves in the same form as had been done in the document.

166. It was also agreed that the final document would be prepared by the consulting firm and submitted to ECA not later than 31 March 1981 to enable the secretariat to distribute it to the potential donors two months before the Yaounde Technical Consultative Meeting.

Plenary meeting to consider the reports of the Committees (agenda item 7)

167. The Chairman of the Meeting of Experts called on the chairmen of the Transport and Communications Committees to present the reports of their respective committees. After this introduction of the committee reports many participants took the floor to make comments of a general nature while specific interventions and amendments were made by a few participants. The amendments were accordingly incorporated in the reports.

168. The meeting adopted the reports of the committees as amended.

169. There followed a discussion on the draft resolutions which concerned, inter alia, (a) the strengthening of the role of ECA, (b) updating the first phase of the Decade programme, (c) preparation of the second phase of the Decade, and (d) the need to support future United Nations pledging conferences.

170. Following introduction of the resolutions by the ECA secretariat, a number of participants made several constructive observations.

171. In connexion with the draft resolution which sought to intensify the utilization of African expertise in consultancy services, the Executive Secretary said that the resolution, in its original form, gave the wrong impression that ECA and United Nations specialized agencies were not making use of African expertise. He confirmed that there was indeed the tendency and the desire to always engage African experts whenever available. He cited a regional ITU project covering the whole of Africa (where the team leader was from Kenya), as an example. Even some donors had started to accept the desirability of utilizing Africans in consultancy services. He said, however, that agencies had encountered difficulties in obtaining releases from governments of qualified

and experienced people for international assignment. ECA was endeavouring to establish an African association of consultancy services which, when realized, would enhance the involvement of African experts in the activities of subregional and regional institutions the Executive Secretary stated, and added that more than 80 per cent of the personnel directly involved in the preparation and promotion of the Decade programme were actually Africans.

172. The representative of ADB said that the Bank supported the Decade programme in concrete terms, had allocated $US 2.5 billion to the Decade programme (of which $US 600 million was for phase I), and that it could set aside a portion of its transport sector funds for studies of Decade projects, as requested in the draft resolution.

173. Speaking for all the agencies, the representative of the ITU stated that the United Nations specialized agencies had a very important role to play in the implementation of the Decade programme, and in fact were actively involved in the implementation of a number of projects. He suggested that their participation should be properly reflected in the draft resolutions.

174. The draft resolutions were then revised to incorporate all substantive observations.

175. The meeting adopted the draft resolutions as amended to be submitted to the Conference of Ministers.

Date and place of the next meeting (agenda item 8)

176. The representative of Morocco stated that his country was prepared to host the third Meeting of Experts and Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning in 1983. Participants unanimously accepted Morocco's offer.

Other matters (agenda item 9)

177. The representative of Morocco described the efforts his country was making to promote the construction of a permanent link between Africa and Europe through the Strait of Gibraltar.

178. He said that only 14 km separated Africa from Europe and a fixed link would not only serve Africa's tremendous trade with Europe but would also make it possible to increase intra-African trade and open up land-locked countries.

179. Although a permanent construction through the Strait of Gibraltar had been studied by engineers from both continents over the last two centuries, it was as a result of an African initiative at the third African Road Conference held in Abidjan in 1976 that a specific proposal had been made concerning a permanent link between Europe and Africa. The International Road Federation had, at the invitation of the Conference, carried out the preliminary studies which had been examined throughly at the fourth African Road Conference in Nairobi which had accorded priority to the construction of a permanent link between Africa and Europe through the Strait of Gibraltar. More recently

a symposium had been organized in Tangiers where experts in various fields from all parts of the world had considered all the aspects and implications of the link. A representative of ECA who had participated in the symposium had stated that the most logical permanent link between Africa and Europe would be through the Strait of Gibraltar.

180. In conclusion, he said that since then Morocco and Spain had set up a joint committee to work on the project and African Governments and ECA were invited to participate actively.

Adoption of the final report (agenda item 10)

181. The Chairman of the Meeting of Experts then called upon the rapporteur of the plenary to present his report.

182. In introducing his report, the rapporteur explained the report recorded the deliberations of the meeting regarding consideration of (a) the report of the Interagency Co-ordinating Committee (b) the report of the implementation of the first phase of the Decade by ECA, (c) World Communications Year (d) the need to establish an information exchange system, (e) the search for additional funds for the first phase of the Decade, and (f) participation by African Governments in the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

183. Several participants made useful contributions and amendments.

184. The Meeting of Experts adopted the report as amended.

Closure of the meeting (agenda item 11)

185. The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:00 p.m. on 15 March 1981.